

Minutes
North Dakota Organic Advisory Board
State Capitol, Bismarck
February 5, 2009
10:45 a.m.

Chairman Brad Brummond called the meeting to order.

Roll Call was taken:

Advisory Board members present: Brad Brummond, Scott Sinner, Britt Jacobson, Grayson Hoberg, Lowell Kaul, Dennis Schill, Christina Dockter, Anne Ongstad, Kayla Pulvermacher, and Chuck Fleming representing Commissioner Roger Johnson

Advisory Board members absent: David Podoll, Keith Kadrmas, Betsy Perkins, Ernie Hoffert, Kevin Kvamme, Chuck Gustafson,

Others present: Marlene Ells; Janet Jacobson; Tim Moore, US Senator Kent Conrad's office.

Scott Sinner moved that the minutes of the December 10, 2008 Board meeting as printed be approved. Seconded by Britt Jacobson. Motion carried.

Lowell Kaul moved that the minutes of the January 30, 2009 Board meeting by teleconference be approved when amended to remove Marlene Ells name as a participant on the call. Seconded by Dennis Schill. Motion carried.

Chuck Fleming gave an updated financial report. Expenditures from July 1, 2007 through December 31, 2008 totaled \$18,917.54. Additional Expenditures since December 31, 2008 were \$5,916.74. Total expenditures to date are \$24,834.28. With additional commitments of approximately \$3,700 dollars, total expenditures and commitments to date are \$28,534.28. A copy of the financial report is attached to the minutes. **Christina Dockter moved that the report be adopted. Seconded by Scott Sinner. Motion carried.**

Reports:

Chuck Fleming gave the Commissioner's report. He commended everyone on their testimony before the House Agriculture Committee on House Bill 1465. He reported that the Department has still not received a contract from USDA for the organic reimbursement program. Fleming indicated that he would be attending the MOSES convention in late February in LaCrosse, Wisconsin.

Chairman Brummond gave the Chairman's report. He said that there are many new provisions in the new farm bill regarding organics and he was gratifying to see that. Areas such as organic research, certification reimbursement, and education provisions are all part of that bill. He commended the work of the Advisory Board in promoting the industry and believes the Board has really made a difference. Brummond indicated that he had received many inquiries regarding organics following the KMOT AG Show, so he was certain that those running the booth at the Show were working very diligently!

Janet Jacobson gave an update on the web site. She indicated that she had spent an hour with Roberta Tjaden, IT Coordinator for the ND Department of Agriculture earlier in the morning going over the changes that needed to be incorporated in the www.ndorganics.nd.gov site. Lowell Kaul wanted to be sure that parity pricing information be placed on the marketing portion of the site. Janet Jacobson reported that NASS does have that information, but it takes someone to dig it out of a massive report that they produce. Scott Sinner pointed out that there is a web site out of Des Moines that has that information and it is kept updated. It was agreed that Janet and Chuck would work to make access to that information easy on the web site.

Lowell Kaul and Marlene Ells staffed the Organic Booth at the KMOT AG Show. They reported a lot of interest by people at the Show. Marlene Ells stated she believes we should continue to have a booth at the ND Farm Bureau convention.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion was held on SB 2438, a bill calling on the ND Commerce Department to establish criteria for sustainable agriculture. Christina Dockter indicated she would be testifying against the bill. Several members expressed interest in attending the hearing which was scheduled for 2:30 pm in the afternoon. Fleming reported that a companion resolution – SCR 4018 had also been introduced during the past week. Copies of the bill and resolution were in the Board members packet.

Discussion was held on how to proceed with support for HB 1465 should it get re-referred to the House Appropriations Committee. Fleming said there would probably not be a lot of prior notice. He indicated he would keep everyone informed and everyone who could make it to the hearing should attempt to do so.

NEW BUSINESS

Lowell Kaul moved that the Board recommend funding of \$1,000 towards the Bowdon Locker Plant feasibility study provided the study includes the potential of slaughtering organic animals and provided that the Ag Products Utilization Commission approves the request. Seconded by Marlene Ells. Motion carried.

Fleming expressed concern over the budget. He pointed out that at the September meeting the Board adopted a budget of \$35,000. At that time Fleming indicated that their office could cover the additional \$5,000 over the \$30,000 grant that was received from the Industrial Commission. He indicated that following the current financial report and the additional expenses required to get the web site up to date, it was likely that we would go over the \$35,000 budget. He recommended that the Board consider putting the “Organic Moment” project of \$3,000 on temporary hold. Chairman Brummond concurred, indicating that the updating of the web site was the top priority. **Britt Jacobson moved that the Organic Moment project be put on temporary hold. Seconded by Christina Dockter. Motion carried.**

Britt Jacobson announced that 20 people had signed up for the FARRMS workshop to be held on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. She indicated that she was very pleased with the interest. She also announced that there would be a training meeting for processors next spring.

Kayla Pulvermacher indicated that ND Farmers Union would like to have a member of the Organic Advisory Board who is a member of the North Dakota Farmers Union become a member of their Policy Committee.

Chairman Brummond announced that there would not be a meeting of the Board on February 26th in Huron South Dakota in conjunction with the NPSAS meeting as previously planned at the December 10th meeting.

Chairman Brummond declared the meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.